



SBA Women's News

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E-MESSAGE FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS SBA DIRECTOR...



\$3.6 trillion to the economy -
Director

Welcome to the first issue of *SBA Women's News*. This quarterly e-newsletter will keep you up-to-date on SBA programs and services that are targeted to women-owned businesses.

According to a new study by the Center for Women's Business Research, "the growth of women's entrepreneurship, driven by access to capital, markets, and networks has outpaced the growth of all businesses by 1.5 to 2 times and that the growth of women's entrepreneurship has been one of the defining economic and social trends in the U.S. over the past decade".

America's 9.1 million women-owned businesses employ
Elaine Guiney, Massachusetts 27.5 million people and contribute

yet women continue to face unique obstacles in the world of business. The U.S. Small Business Administration is doing more than ever to counsel, teach and inspire women entrepreneurs.

We hope that the information contained in this e-newsletter will help you establish or expand a successful business.

SBA RECOGNIZED FOR SUPPORTING WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS

The U.S. Small Business Administration was singled out among federal agencies by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council for its role in promoting the growth and success of women-owned business.

The SBA offers a wide array of programs and services to current and potential women entrepreneurs through its various programs, especially the Office of Women's Business Ownership, its network of about 80 women's business centers from Maine to American Samoa, and the Online Women's Business Center, which currently has information available in seven languages. In 2002 the SBA guaranteed 11,280 loans for more than \$2 billion to women-owned businesses. So far in 2003, the number of SBA loans to women-owned businesses has increased 36 percent over the same period in 2002, from 4,179 to 5,687. In 2002. The SBA in Massachusetts backed 480 loans totaling \$41 million to women business owners. As of 7/18/03, 451 loans worth \$30 million have been approved to women-owned firms in Massachusetts.
(continued on page 2)

SBA Recognition (continued from page 1)

The Women's Business Enterprise National Council is a leading advocate of women-owned businesses as suppliers to America's corporations. WBENC's Applause Awards honor individuals or entities for substantial accomplishments in helping women entrepreneurs reach their full potential. Other award recipients were Donna Fujimoto Cole, president and CEO of Cole Chemical and Distribution; Sharon Hadary, executive director of the Center for Women's Business Research; Bruce Nelson, chairman & CEO of Office Depot; and the IBM Corporation. ■

TWO NEW WEB SITES: WOMEN -21 AND E-BUSINESS INSTITUTE

SBA recently announced the launch of www.women-21.gov, a new Web site to help women small business owners deal with the ever-changing business climate and identify federal government resources for women.

The Web site is an outgrowth of Women Entrepreneurship in the 21st Century, a series of women's summits to discuss the increasing role of women in the American economy and the concerns about roadblocks to growth, long-term viability and their financial health. ■



To help entrepreneurs with business training, the SBA's Office of Entrepreneurial Development recently launched the new E-Business Institute at www.sba.gov/training. An expanded online training resource for small businesses, the Institute is a virtual campus offering online courses, workshops, information resources, learning tools and direct access to electronic counseling and other forms of technical assistance. (continued on page 3)

SBA/Staples Forum Focus on Innovation

The SBA and Staples will host a small business innovation forum on Thursday, September 25, 2003, at 12:00 noon at 1660 Soldiers Field Road, Brighton, MA, the very first Staples location. Small business owners and entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to tap into expert knowledge on how to bring innovative ideas to life and more.

Forum panelists include SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto, Staples Chairman and Founder Tom Stemberg, a patent and trade expert and local small business owners on the cutting edge of innovation in their businesses.

For directions to the store, click here: <http://www.staples-locator.com>. Interested small businesses may RSVP at 1-888-302-0000.

E-Business Institute (continued from page 2)

Key features include:

- More than 50 *free* online courses, workshops and electronic guides;
- Direct links to information about SBA training events all over the country;
- A virtual library with over 200 free E-books & publications, numerous prominent business magazines, national newspapers and links to the *best of the best* business resource sites around the country;
- Direct links to approximately 30 universities and colleges offering online business programs;
- Access to many powerful electronic resources for young entrepreneurs;
- Integration of SBA's online and other training resources; and,
- Availability of virtual workshops or web events that are industry specific and meet the day-to-day needs of small businesses. ■

More about government contracting

WOMENBIZ.GOV

This Web site is organized to target the five specific stages that a woman business owner should go through as she begins to explore whether the federal government is the right customer for her.



1. Meeting the Basics
2. Finding Your Market
3. Getting Started
4. Finding Business Opportunities
5. Key Contacts

Whether you are just starting to think about bidding on your first government contract, or you are about to submit your tenth proposal, there are key pieces of information about selling to the federal government that can be useful to you at any stage of your business. ■

What's New @ womenbiz.gov

Just Announced! [Information for Women-Owned Small Businesses](http://www.womenbiz.gov/infow-osb.html) (www.womenbiz.gov/infow-osb.html) marketing to the federal government and its prime contractors.

Just announced! U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Hewlett Packard and U.S. Small Business Administration to co-host business matchmaking events. (www.womenbiz.gov/matchmaking.html)

SUCCESS STORY OF THE MONTH



Jean K. Des Roches
Founder and Executive
Director of A.S.S.E.T.S.,
Inc.

DIFFERENTLY-ABLED GET WIRED

Acushnet-based A.S.S.E.T.S., Inc. (Assistive School System Educational Technology Services Inc.) was founded in 2001 by parents and friends concerned about the lack of assistive technology services available locally.

Assistive technology is any item, piece of equipment, or product system that helps make life easier for a person who has a disability, chronic illness, or who is elderly. For the differently-abled, this assistance can provide quality and equality in the classroom and in the community.

There are a variety of different reasons people use assistive technology. Such technology can benefit those with acquired speech loss due to motor neuron disease (ALS), Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, Huntington's chorea or congenital speech loss due to cerebral palsy. It also is used to adapt materials for people with learning disabilities, low-vision or blindness as well as those with physical disabilities. Some of the benefits of assistive technology include greater control over one's life by allowing for increased participation in and contributions to activities within the home, school, community, and work environments. Improved interaction with others also improves self-esteem.

Jean K. Des Roches, the founder and Executive Director of ASSETS, has more than fifteen years of experience in the technology field including employment by large corporations such as AT&T, and holds an industry certification as a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE). In addition to her technical skills, she is experienced in project management and has personal experience with issues that face the differently-abled population. As a parent of a child with special needs, she is well-trained in many aspects of special education.

After creating a basic business plan and a vision for ASSETS, Des Roches conducted a search for organizations that help the formation of small businesses, and decided on the Boston Chapter of the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), a U.S. Small Business Administration resource partner. She credits SCORE with transforming her vision into a reality. "The team of SCORE volunteers I worked with provided guidance and support every step of the way. Marty Kress, Bob Woods, Jack Calechman and Lew Cohen helped me with strategy, marketing, financial, legal and non-profit issues. There is almost an unlimited number of ways in which SCORE helped us achieve our goals. The fact that there are so many experienced and talented people willing and waiting to help astounds me. I am convinced that our new organization would not have made such tremendous progress in the past year without SCORE."

ASSETS' volunteer Board of Directors was convened over a year ago and has overseen amazing results for their clients who range in age from 12 to 60.

"Research has revealed that there is a substantial need for a local resource to provide the types of services we offer such as the installation and customization of hardware and software. Instruction for students, parents, and caregivers on the proper usage of these technologies has provided some amazing rewards for our clients," states Des Roches. (Continued on page 5)

A.S.S.E.T.S., Inc. (continued from page 4)

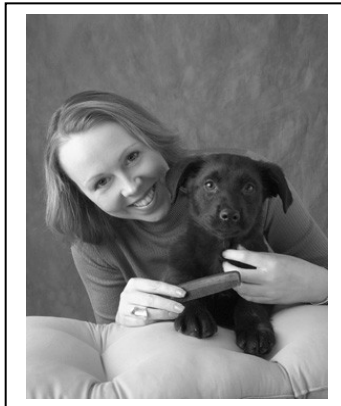
“The first young man we served achieved dramatic results after his equipment was put into place. Before the utilization of technology, this non-verbal 12-year old student was, in effect, segregated from classmates and curriculum. Within one month he was using his augmentative communication device to communicate with teacher and classmates. He was especially pleased, for the first time, to successfully order his own food at a fast food restaurant! Perhaps more importantly, he was able to finally gain access to the general curriculum and participate in classroom activities.”

Additionally, “We have just begun working with an older person who had been using a communication device in the recent past but was forced to give it up. The technician who originally programmed the device was no longer available to provide customization and training. “Can you imagine someone literally taking your voice away from you for two years before returning it?” asked Des Roches.

As far as providing direct services, ASSETS is working to create training and educational programs for educators and others. This effort will enable ASSETS to build competency over time and expand resources in this area.

For more information on ASSETS, please visit their website at www.assets-inc.org or call Jean K. Des Roches at 508-998-1756. To find the SCORE location nearest you, visit www.score.org. ■

April 2003 CWE Client of the Month



***Christine Molt, All Breed
Mobile Dog***

When Christine Molt was fired from her job over a year ago, she decided to launch her own mobile dog grooming business. Today with the help of the Center for Women & Enterprise, Christine has a business with over \$30,000 in revenues and anticipates increasing her revenues by at least 50% this year. Since launching her business, Christine has increased her savings by 10% and decreased her debt by 30%. As her company continues to grow, Christine hopes to not only support herself but also save enough money to buy her own house in the near future.

The Center for Women & Enterprise provided Christine with the legal and financial skills necessary to start her business. CWE's Worcester Office also provided Christine with the support system Christine needed to mentally prepare her to succeed in the business world.

Christine's service area includes central and eastern Massachusetts. If you would like to learn more about her dog grooming services, please contact her at ChrisMolt@aol.com or 508-792-5816

The Center for Women & Enterprise (CWE) is the SBA-sponsored Women's Business Center (WBC) in Massachusetts. CWE empowers women to become economically self sufficient and prosperous through entrepreneurship. As a not-for-profit educational organization, it provides courses, consulting and access to resources that enable women to start and/or expand their business. Visit CWE's Web site at: <http://www.cweboston.org/>

Massachusetts 2003 Small Business Women in Business Advocate



***Jennifer Lane, Principal,
Compass Planning Associates, LLC
and President, New England
Women Business Owners
70 Walnut Street, Suite 419
Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts***

The President designates one week each year as National Small Business Week in recognition of the small business community's contribution to the American economy and society. One of the most exciting events during Small Business Week is the presentation of awards spot-lighting the outstanding contributions of small business people and advocates for small business. Jennifer Lane was selected as the Massachusetts Women in Business Advocate for 2003.

Jennifer Lane's commitment to women's business was inspired by a family of strong women who encouraged her to express her adventurous spirit. After a first career as a commercial pilot, Jennifer founded Compass Planning Associates to equip women, in particular, to steer their own financial courses.

Jennifer's volunteer efforts serve community organizations that empower women, including: New England Women Business Owners, a business organization that helps emerging business owners build contacts for growth, where Jennifer is president; Womankind, a financial literacy non-profit where Jennifer serves on the board and facilitates classes; and the Center for Women and Enterprise, where she leads courses that prepare entrepreneurs for the rigors of small-business ownership.

She is also New England Cable News' weekly personal finance commentator and an author. ■



Online Women's Business Center (www.onlinewbc.gov)

SBA's Online Women's Business Center is a free interactive Web site to assist women in starting and growing their business. The Web site offers inspirational success stories, information on starting, financing and expanding a business, management, marketing, exporting, government contracts, child care module, research and development, topic forums & newsgroups. Visit the women's business Center at www.onlinewbc.gov.

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The SBA Web site provides you with up-to-date special information on the SBA programs described throughout this text, as well as SBA publications, a calendar of local events, points of contact, on-line training, and access to other federal on-line services, electronic mail forums and downloadable shareware files.

Online Registration Opens for SBA's National Entrepreneurial Conference and Expo

Online registration is now available for the SBA's national annual celebration honoring America's top entrepreneurs and the National Small Business Person of the Year.

Business owners and other individuals interested in taking part in the National Entrepreneurial Conference and EXPO may now register for events online at <http://www.sba.gov/50/>. Complete information about the Expo and the SBA's 50th anniversary events is available on the SBA's conference Web site. The site will be updated regularly with new event information.

The three-day SBA event, to be held at the Washington Hilton & Towers hotel, will feature award ceremonies and presentations by notable speakers from industry and government on issues of vital interest. ■

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

To subscribe to our quarterly women's newsletter as well as our district office newsletter, register online at <http://web.sba.gov/list/>

SBA ONLINE CALENDAR

For online listings of events in your area, visit our SBA's Massachusetts online calendar at www.sba.gov/ma, select training events from the menu listed.